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NRM Newsletter

Natural Resource Management

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1-2014

# Natural Resource Management Newsletter

Dave Willis

*South Dakota State University*

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# NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (NRM) NEWSLETTER



**Department of Natural Resource Management**  
*"Regionally Relevant but Nationally Recognized"*  
**South Dakota State University**  
*Volume 73, Number 1, January 2014*

## Newsletter Update—Dave Willis (Department Head)

Happy new year to all alumni and friends from the SDSU Department of Natural Resource Management (NRM)! Despite the cold weather, things are still running at full throttle around here. Faculty are busy, the graduate students are doing their great work, our office staff is superior, and classes restart on January 13 for spring semester. Never a dull moment!

Photo credit for the banner image: acknowledgement for this month's pallid sturgeon image goes to NRM Ph.D. student **Matt Wagner**. Matt has a great repository of digital images for freshwater fishes. Matt works under **Dr. Katie Bertrand**, and they plan to complete a book on the fishes of the Dakotas.

## NEWS FROM OUR ALUMNI

### Galen Jons

**Galen Jons** (B.S., Wildlife & Fisheries with a Chemistry minor, 1990; followed by an M.S. from Mississippi State University in 1993) is a Natural Resource Specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Gavins Point Project in Yankton, SD and has been in that position since 2004. He is responsible for managing Emergent Sandbar Habitat (ESH) projects on the Missouri River near Yankton. The ESH projects are instrumental in the recovery of the threatened Piping Plovers and endangered Interior Least Terns, as well as other species such as turtles that rely on barren sandbar habitat for successful recruitment. Galen also oversees several seasonal crews who survey and track adults, nests and chicks of both plovers and terns. These surveys provide important information on population trends of the birds and also provide vital information to the Corps to aid in making water management decisions.

The Missouri River near Yankton is crucial to the tern and plover populations on the Missouri River system, often harboring more than 40% of the birds on the entire system.

A native of Bonesteel, South Dakota, Galen previously spent 11 years as a fisheries biologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, working with a variety of fish species on rivers and lakes throughout Texas. He is married to DJ Jons, who works for Funeral Directors Life Insurance Company of Abilene, TX and specializes in Learning & Development across the U.S. Galen and DJ enjoy gardening, walking, biking, bird watching, family time and serving the community.

### Jim Ray

**Jim Ray** (MS, Wildlife & Fisheries Science, 1990, under **Dr. Ken Higgins**) is a wildlife biologist with Pantex in Amarillo, TX. Jim had a very interesting article on the northern grasshopper mouse on the Pantex web site

(<http://www.pantex.com/news/blog/Pages/WP%E2%80%9393One-Tough-Ole-Mouse.aspx>). Did you know that this mouse is the number one predator of a well-studied population of horned lizards in Texas? He also has a link to a recording of the vocalizations for this mouse that roars (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E35OMfL4A4>).



#### Cody Warner

**Cody Warner** (B.S., Wildlife & Fisheries 2008; M.S., Biological Sciences, 2013 under **Dr. Chuck Dieter**) is currently employed as a Wetland Specialist for the South Dakota NRCS. His home office is in Britton, SD but he services Day, Marshall, and Roberts counties.

#### Bobbi (Adams) Johnson and McLain Johnson

After the December newsletter, we heard from **McLain Johnson** (M.S., Wildlife & Fisheries, 2011 under **Dr. Graeb**) and **Bobbi (Adams) Johnson** (B.S., Wildlife & Fisheries, 2010).

“In October, Bobbi Adams (now Bobbi Johnson!) and I were married in Seattle. Bobbi continues her doctoral work in the Biology Department at Washington State University in Pullman. Prelims were navigated successfully. Her work comparing genetic structure of modern and ancient salmon is impressive, and is gaining her distinction among many professionals in the world of Pacific salmonid research (although she would never admit that, even as the grants, awards, interest, etc. keep piling up!). Meanwhile, in nearby Orofino, ID, I have been continuing my work with the Nez Perce Tribe-Department of Fisheries Resources Management. As a Project Leader in the Research Division, I direct and manage two projects. One project evaluates the effectiveness of hatchery supplementation on natural steelhead populations in the Clearwater River, and the other monitors site fidelity of adult fall Chinook to hatchery release locations throughout the Snake River basin. Nothing is more fascinating than watching these fish make their run through the Columbia River and into Idaho. It’s a long run! The Pacific Time Zone has been good to us. Merry Christmas!”

#### Steve Donovan

Ducks Unlimited announced that **Steve Donovan** (B.S., Wildlife & Fisheries, 1987) will be the new manager of conservation programs for South Dakota. Steve has ~17 years of prior experience with DU in Nebraska and on the west coast. Steve replaces **Rick Warhurst** as the SD Manager; Rick also has been a long-time friend of the SDSU natural resource management program. We certainly welcome Steve back to SD, given the habitat conservation and management needs in the state!

#### Bernard Hien

**Bernard Hien** (MS, Wildlife & Fisheries, 2005 under **Dr. Jon Jenks**) is Cameroon’s Representative for the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Bernard reported in a recent

email to Dr. Jenks that he will be sending his niece to SDSU in 2014. Thank you, Representative Hien!

#### Drake Pintail

**Mick Hanan** (BS, Wildlife & Fisheries, 2006; MS, 2009 under **Drs. KC Jensen** and **Bob Klaver**) provided this digital image of a drake pintail. Mick did not send it for the newsletter, but I just had to share it. It’s very rare to see a sprig this nice during late fall in the north country.



#### North Dakota Game and Fish Department

**Dr. Jon Jenks** attended the NDGFD Christmas party in mid-December of 2013. While Jon was visiting with **Greg Gullickson** (B.S., Wildlife & Fisheries, 1998), Greg said that he counted 12 SDSU alumni at the staff meeting and that he and other SDSU grads estimated that 10% of department had degrees from SDSU.

Part of the reason that I (Willis) had to find some way to get that tidbit of information into our NRM newsletter is the fond place in my heart for all our good friends with the NDGFD. I owe that entire group a huge personal debt of gratitude. I truly believe that I would not even have been gainfully employed within this wonderful profession if it had not been for **Don Duerre** (B.S. and M.S.; Wildlife & Fisheries; 1958, 1959), who mentored me through three summers of work experience with NDGFD; Don and **Dale Henegar** (B.S. and M.S.; Wildlife & Fisheries; 1949, 1961) who helped me with funding for an M.S. assistantship at UND; and **Emil Berard, Sam Enger, Bob Patterson, and Jim Ragan**, who taught me how to be a field biologist.

So, what I really think is that some SDSU grad or grads with NDGFD should make a list of all of our alumni up there, and we can put that in the next newsletter! ☺  
Any volunteers??

### SDSU Social: Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference

All SDSU Alumni and Friends are invited to a social at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference at the Sheraton Kansas City in Kansas City, Missouri. If you plan to attend, be sure to put us on your calendar for Monday evening, January 27, from 6:00 to 8:30. We don't think we will be listed in the program, but we'll be there! Please help us spread the word. **Dr. KC Jensen** volunteered (again) to be in charge of the social, so look for him at the meeting for final details on room location.

### Higgins the Hunting Dog

This picture was just too darn good NOT to put in the newsletter. Below is Higgins the springer spaniel, owned and operated by **Dr. Chuck Berry**, retired Leader for the SD Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, and Professor Emeritus in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. Chuck says this may be a pampered pooch, but he can hunt! By the way, Higgins the wonderdog (see the Brookings Wildlife Federation newsletter for his hunting stories at

<http://www.sdwf.org/affiliate-announcements.html>)

should not be confused with **Dr. Ken Higgins**, our retired Assistant Leader for the Coop Unit and also Professor Emeritus of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences.



### SDSU Ecology Club

Following are the 2014 officers for the SDSU Ecology Club (sanctioned by the Ecological Society of America). We certainly thank these students for their willingness to serve in these professional positions.

President: **Gabrielle Maltaverne**

Vice President: **Troy Lambert/ Kelly Sutko**

Secretary: **Nicole Boone/ Samantha Shaw**

Treasurer: **Kelly Sutko**

Research Coordinator: **David Schumann**

Web/Media Relations Coordinator: **Alex Boger**

Scuba: **Austin Hanson**

Community Outreach Coordinator/Recruiter: **Nicole Boone**

Events Planner. Recruitment: **Jennifer McLaughlin/ Brenna Conley**

### Malia Volke

**Malia Volke**, NRM Ph.D. student under **Dr. Carter Johnson**, won the student poster award competition at the 2013 Eastern South Dakota Water Conference. Their poster was entitled *Formation of the White River-Missouri River Delta in South Dakota: Opportunities for Cottonwood Forest Regeneration*.



### In memoriam

We are sad to report on the passing of a man known to many of our alumni and friends. **Charles R. Peterson**, 87, of Brookings, passed away on Wednesday, December 18, 2013. Memorial services will be held at 11:00 am Saturday, December 28, 2013. Charles' wife, **Dr. Carol Jean Peterson**, Provost

Emerita of SDSU, has been a long-time friend of the department as well. Charles was a very serious big game hunter and environmentalist, having hunted large game extensively in North America. Memorials are apparently being directed to the SDSU Foundation for a Wildlife and Fisheries Scholarship in the name of Charles R. Peterson. We certainly can find worthy students who will very much appreciate the scholarship. We offer our sincere thanks and sincere condolences to Dr. Carol Peterson.

### 2013 Graduate Student Completions

During 2013, 16 graduate students completed their degree programs. BIOS = Biological Sciences; WFS = Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. We express our appreciation for a job well done and offer our best wishes to every single one of them!

<i>Student Name</i>	<i>M.S. or Ph.D.</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Advisor (s)</i>



Boyda, Eric	M.S.	BIOS	Evaluation of the reference unit method for herbaceous biomass estimation in grasslands	Xu, Butler
Carroll, Benjamin	M.S.	WFS	Using resident small mammals to assess the habitat potential of experimental biofuels feedstocks	Dieter, Rupp
DeJong, Julie	Ph.D.	WFS	An evaluation of the effects of climate variability on the size of wild North American duck eggs from 1859–2010	Higgins
Dierks, Andrew	M.S.	BIOS	Plan B (non-thesis) option	Jensen
Felts, Eli	M.S.	WFS	Ecology of glacial relict fishes in South Dakota's Sandhills region	Bertrand
Haffley, Trenton	M.S.	WFS	Movements, survival, and sightability of white-tailed deer in southeastern South Dakota	Jenks
Howell, Jessica	M.S.	WFS	Larval fish assemblages of three eastern South Dakota rivers	Bertrand, Graeb
Kaemingk, Mark	Ph.D.	WFS	Interactions between age-0 yellow perch and bluegill and elucidating factors influencing their subsequent recruitment in Nebraska Sandhill lakes	Willis
Kafle, Arjun	M.S.	BIOS	Assessing the ecological status of Wadeable streams using midge communities (Chironomidae)	Troelstrup

			in the Northern Glaciated Plains Ecoregion	
Krause, Jacob	M.S.	WFS	Biotic integrity and northern pike ecology in eastern South Dakota streams	Bertrand
Letvin, Alexander	M.S.	WFS	Biotic impacts in shallow water bodies of South Dakota resulting from common carp invasion	Brown
Schaffer, Brian	M.S.	WFS	An evaluation of life history parameters of white-tailed deer ( <i>Odocoileus virginianus</i> ) in North Dakota	Jenks
Sidie-Slettedahl, Anna	M.S.	WFS	Evaluating use of autonomous recording units for monitoring yellow rails and other nocturnal wet meadow birds	Jensen
Solem, Alex	M.S.	WFS	Development of sustainable harvest strategies for cellulose-based biofuels: harvest effects on game bird production	Jensen, Rupp
Stevens, Tanner	M.S.	WFS	Channel catfish food habits and population dynamics in South Dakota impoundments	Graeb
Warner, Cody	M.S.	BIOS	Evaluation of various foliar sprays for use as a Canada goose grazing deterrent	Dieter

### Fish Bioenergetics Model

There currently is much professional activity in fish bioenergetics modeling as our Coop Unit Leader, **Dr. Steve Chipps**, leads an effort with Chuck Madenjian and Jim Breck to update the model. Many biologists throughout the profession are eagerly awaiting an improved model, which is used widely throughout the discipline. Steve even heard from Dr. Jim Mitchell, the

originator of much of the fish bioenergetics work, who said “There’s an explosion going on. We are excited about this!” All of our fisheries-oriented alumni and friends now that the influence of an improved model will ripple throughout the entire discipline. We are truly fortunate to have Steve as the Leader of our Unit! This is a big deal for the reputation of our NRM program.

#### Carter Johnson on NPR

**Dr. Carter Johnson**, Distinguished Professor in the NRM Department, was interviewed by National Public Radio for a story entitled *Grasslands Get Squeezed As Another 1.6 Million Acres Go Into Crops*, Dec. 22, 2013. Readers can access the story at this link.

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2013/12/22/255732264/grasslands-get-squeezed-as-another-1-6-million-acres-go-into-crops>

#### Crappie bite at Lake Thompson

I don’t think that I will be letting out any secrets by the time that this newsletter is actually sent. ☺ So, let me just mention that the black crappies have really been biting out at Lake Thompson during December. As you can see in the picture below, our three hard-working graduate students did quite well over there.



Left to right: **Matt Wagner, Kjetil Henderson, and Brad Smith**. I am absolutely certain that this could not have been a weekday, and I am equally certain that all three of them are completely caught up on their graduate research efforts. ☺

#### Dr. Tagir Gilmanov

**Dr. Tagir Gilmanov**, Professor of Ecology and Environmental Sciences, has announced that he will

retire on 1 February 2014. Dr. Gilmanov is a quantitative scientist with substantial skills and experience in natural resource modeling. His most recent work involved building dynamic models of agro-ecosystems using such measures as carbon flux and climatic drivers. Tagir developed a long-term working relationship with the USGS-EROS Data Center, and is a highly published and respected scientist. For those of you interested in such statistics, I checked the Web of Science citation numbers for Tagir, and found that he has been cited over 100 times each year from 2010 through 2013. His “h-index” is very respectable at 14. Following is a recent example of the type of in-depth research he conducts. Click on the PDF icon to view the paper.

Gilmanov, T.G., B.K. Wylie, L.L. Tieszen, T.P. Meyers, V.S. Baron, C.J. Bernacchi, D.P. Billesbach, G.G. Burba, M.L. Fischer, A.J. Glenn, N.P. Hanan, J.L. Hatfield, M.W. Heuer, S.E. Hollinger, D.M. Howard, R. Matamala, J.H. Prueger, M. Tenuta, and D.G. Young. 2014. CO<sub>2</sub> uptake and ecophysiological parameters of the grain crops of midcontinent North America: Estimates from flux tower measurements. *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* 164:162–175. [PDF](#)

Dr. Gilmanov plans to continue his research efforts during retirement as an adjunct faculty member.

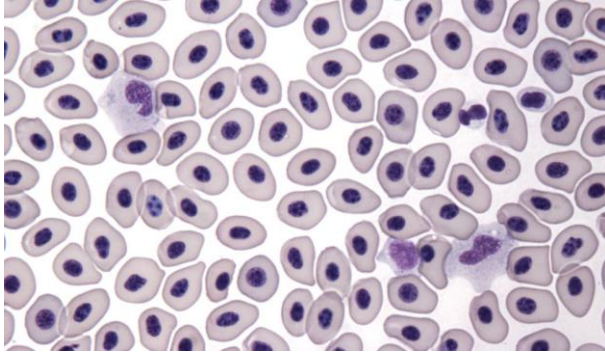


*Dr. Tagir Gilmanov at one of his carbon flux research sites.*

#### Artwork

The image below almost seems like artwork to me, so I thought it might interest some of you. My sister, **Dr. Diane Brown**, is a veterinary pathologist with an interest in fish blood, so we got her some samples from various fish species a couple of summers back. She gave me this image of largemouth bass blood and told me things like “this is 1000x original magnification with Wright-Giemsa stain,” “these nucleated red blood cells differ from mammalian anucleated red blood cells,” “there is one white blood cell in the upper left quadrant

and two in the lower right quadrant,” and “there are two thrombocytes in the upper right quadrant.”



#### Prairie changes over time

Senator John Thune published the following article in the *Rapid City Journal* on January 6, 2014. As I mentioned in the last newsletter issue, I was impressed that Senator Thune took time to attend the Pheasant Habitat Summit last month.

“South Dakota’s landscape has significantly changed since the first block of native sod was turned over by a horse-drawn plow more than 150 years ago. These changes include native grasslands converted to fertile croplands that can now produce more than 250 bushels of corn per acre; massive herds of bison replaced by cattle, horses, and sheep; and a population that has grown from a few thousand settlers to more than 840,000 people.

This winter’s bitter cold accompanied by gusty winds across South Dakota’s prairie landscape demonstrate how shelterbelts, crop stubble left standing in fields, and a patchwork of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) fields offer protection to the land, humans and wildlife.

Noticeable to all of us is how much South Dakota’s landscape has changed just over the past few years. Many long-standing tree belts have disappeared and the number of CRP fields have grown smaller resulting in less permanent vegetative ground cover, habitat, and protection from South Dakota weather.

The loss of habitat, coupled with the 60 percent drop in pheasant numbers last year, spurred Gov. Dennis Daugaard to call a pheasant habitat summit in Huron on Dec. 6. I attended this event and had the opportunity to visit with a large cross-section of South Dakotans who shared the common goal of reviving South Dakota’s pheasant population.

I was encouraged by the willingness of those who spoke and attended the summit to work together to preserve

South Dakota’s pheasant hunting legacy. In attendance were city government officials, farmers and ranchers, with both large and small operations, commodity organization representatives, as well as good friends from Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, National Wildlife Federation, and other conservation and agriculture organizations.

I believe that once again, South Dakotans will meet this new challenge with workable solutions to the dwindling pheasant numbers. What encouraged me the most was the spirit of cooperation among those who attended. Recognizing that South Dakota’s number-one industry is agriculture, we must continue to keep South Dakota agriculture strong and vibrant and maximize its crop production potential while protecting the land and its inhabitants.

Much of the protection from South Dakota’s sometimes harsh weather has been placed on the land, thanks to assistance from federal conservation programs. Tree planting, establishment of permanent vegetative cover, and conservation tillage, along with the technical assistance needed to ensure they achieve maximum results have all been authorized by Farm Bill conservation titles.

As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and an avid hunter, I have been very vocal in making sure my colleagues understand the critical importance of balanced Commodity and Conservation Titles in the Farm Bill. While South Dakotans continue working to rebuild the pheasant population in South Dakota, I will continue to do my part in Washington.”

#### Breaking News on the Pheasant Habitat Work Group

Hot off the press – right before sending this newsletter, I just received a press release from the Governor’s Office listing the 13 pheasant habitat work group members appointed by Governor Daugaard. They include:

- Pam Roberts, Pierre (Chair): retired Secretary of SD Department of Labor and Regulation
- Barry Dunn, Brookings: Dean, College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences at South Dakota State University
- Tim Kessler, Aberdeen: Pheasants Forever Board of Directors, former Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission chair
- Mary Duvall, Pierre: District 24 state representative
- Jason Frerichs, Wilmot: farmer, Senate Minority Leader, District 1 state senator



- John Cooper, Pierre: GFP commissioner, former GFP Secretary
- Steve Halverson, Kennebec: farmer, owner of Halverson Hunts
- Jan Nicolay, Chester: former state representative, conservation advocate
- Jeff Zimprich, Huron: USDA-NRCS state director
- Doug Deiter, Faulkton: farmer
- Jeff Vonk, Pierre: GFP Secretary
- Lucas Lentsch, Pierre: SD Secretary of Agriculture
- Nathan Sanderson, Pierre: Governor's policy advisor for agriculture and GFP

The Governor has apparently requested a July final report from this work group. Certainly, we can cross our fingers and hope for a positive outcome from this level of attention by the Governor.

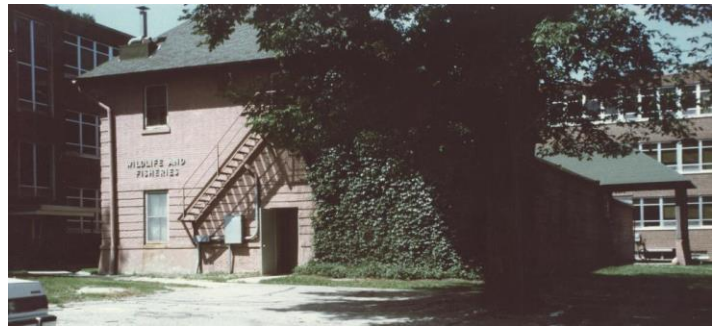
#### Visiting Scientist

**Dr. Zhenguo Niu** will be a Visiting Scholar in the NRM Department from December 2013 to May 2014, hosted by **Dr. Carol Johnston**. Dr. Niu is a Professor at the Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth, Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, where he has worked since 2001. His six-month sabbatical leave is funded by a grant from the China Scholarship Council. Dr. Niu received his Ph.D. in soil science from Chinese Agricultural University in 2001. His research focuses mainly on wetland mapping and evaluation by remote sensing and GIS. He can be contacted at his SDSU email address. [zhenguo.niu@sdstate.edu](mailto:zhenguo.niu@sdstate.edu)



#### Memory Lane

The former Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences building was demolished in August of 1993 (scanned images below). The building was constructed in 1899 as the original Agricultural Hall on campus. Years of planning by former department head **Dr. Chuck Scalet** resulted in the Wildlife and Fisheries program moving to the new Northern Plains Biostress Laboratory in 1993. The heavy equipment was moving in for demolition even as the last pickup loads of equipment were being removed for transport to Biostress. I remember it as a hot and humid day. The building sat north and east of what is now Berg Agricultural Hall, which visible in the background in two of the three images below.



#### Dr. Sandy Smart

**Dr. Sandy Smart**, Range Science Professor in NRM, is widely respected within his discipline. He has just been elected to a 3-year term on the Professional Accreditation Committee for the Society for Range Management (SRM). That provides great recognition for the SDSU range science program and also ensures that we (i.e., NRM) are well aware of SRM accreditation requirements as our re-accreditation time period approaches. In addition, Sandy was elected to Chair the Grassland Management Program of AG\*IDEA, which includes our Grassland Management Graduate Certificate program (along with Oklahoma State University, Kansas State University, University of Nebraska, and North Dakota State University). We are



seeing a continual expansion in the number of students interested in the online range/grassland graduate course offerings. Thanks for all you do, Sandy.

#### EcoSun Prairie Farm

An update on the EcoSun Prairie Farm restoration efforts was published in the Jan/Feb 2014 issue of the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*. Authors were NRM postdoctoral research associate **Dr. Cody Zilverberg**, NRM faculty member **Dr. Carter Johnson**, Plant Science faculty members **Dr. Tom Schumacher** and **Dr. Arvid Boe**, USDA-ARS (Mandan, ND) scientists **Dr. Scott Kronberg** and **Dr. David Archer**, and farm manager **Craig Novotny**. One of the figures in the article shows the relationship between net revenue for grass-based products as a function of corn price per bushel. If you are interested in the updated information in the article, try the following link.

<http://www.jswnonline.org/content/69/1/22A.full.pdf+html>

I know that the link works on campus, and we are hopeful that it will work off-campus because the authors paid for open access. If you cannot access the article at this link, please email **Carter Johnson** ([Carter.Johnson@sdstate.edu](mailto:Carter.Johnson@sdstate.edu)) for a PDF file of the publication.

#### Donors via SDSU Foundation

Following are NRM donors from September through November of 2013. We also had three anonymous donations during that time period. Our sincere thanks to all of you!

Barry H. and Jane K. Dunn  
Brookings Wildlife Federation  
Carrol O. and Janice M. Calkins  
Charles G. and Dorcas S. Scalet  
David W. and Susan E. Willis  
Gary E. and Pamela J. Larson  
James J. and Marjorie J. Hubert  
Jayme P. and Rebecca Trygstad  
John and Patsy T. Popowski  
Kent C. and Sandra A. Jensen  
Kerry A. Lucke  
Kurt J. and Lucia B. Forman  
Lan Xu  
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Zeno W. Wicks, III & Roxanne Savaryn-Wicks

#### **CONTACT US with news, comments or questions:**

**PLEASE** contact us with Alumni Updates. Also, **please** send email address updates, corrections, and share the newsletter with friends and alumni so we can continue to grow our email address list. **Thanks** for any help!

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**YES!** I wish to contribute to the SDSU Department of Natural Resource Management.

Online gifts can be made through: [www.sdstatefoundation.org](http://www.sdstatefoundation.org)

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